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LIVE 8 LINEUP

Want to know when your favorite bands are performing? We have the answers. **19**

WORRY IN THE WATER

With shark attacks making headlines, should New Englanders worry? **20**

COMING MONDAY

Demand is so strong for best-sellers that the Boston Public Library faces a challenge having enough copies on the shelves for readers.

TONIGHT

the edge

ENTERTAINMENT • ARTS • LIFE • STYLE

New excellent experience

The Gin Blossoms, right, play the North Shore Music Theatre, 62 Dunham Road, Beverly, 8 p.m. \$35-\$40. www.nsmmt.org

Wide Awake

Aster Awake plays downstairs at the Middle East, 472 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, 9 p.m. \$30. 18-plus. 617-864-EAST.



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THE EDGE

Producer Aliza Shapiro drags local culture to new places

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spoken word performers and drag artists to my shows," said Shapiro, who often mixes straight, gay and transgendered performers. "I like to stir things up and mix them together."

Shapiro is now producing Wreckage, a monthly satirical drag show with an ongoing "American Idol"-style talent contest that's an offshoot of her weekly TraniWreck drag show at Jacque's Cabaret.

Boston-based transgender performance artist Ben McCoy — whose gender-bending skits are both hilarious and moving — is a frequent Truth Serum performer.

"I've worked with Aliza for several years," said McCoy, a 24-year-old who studied painting at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. "She is an amazing producer who really pushes to bring out an audience. There's no one else in Boston doing what she does."

Tuesday night, Shapiro will co-present the first Boston appearance of the popular Australian post-punk band Love of Diagrams, which has toured throughout Europe and Japan and is about to tour the States. She's teaming the band with Leslie and the Ly's, a hot local act that's getting a lot of media attention. The Ly's play kitsch hip-hop featuring a lead singer who channels Elvis as a space alien while rapping comical, bizarre rhymes over catchy electronic beats. Also on the program are Roh Delikat and Boston's The Empties.

What does it take to produce on the fringes, where she also stencils and sells vintage ties to help make ends meet?

"You have to be an insomniac with attention-deficit disorder who has a healthy mixture of neuroticism and control freakiness," Shapiro said. "And you must want to push other people's art for the betterment of Boston culture."

Truth Serum's upcoming productions include: "Drag, Dissent and Decadence" with the TraniWreck crew, Monday, 10 p.m. at Jacque's Cabaret, 79 Broadway in Boston's Theater District (\$6, 21+); Love of Diagrams with Leslie and the Ly's, Tuesday, 9 p.m. at Great Scott, 1222 Commonwealth Ave., Allston (\$7, 18+). For more information, go to www.truthserum.org

STAFF PHOTOS BY PATRICK WHITEMORE
LIFE IS A CABARET, OLD CHUM: Aliza Shapiro adjusts the mike, below, as Ms. Dominika does her act at Jacque's Cabaret in Boston. Below right, Shapiro speaks with Ms. Dominika in a dressing room at Jacque's.



'TRUTH' OR DARE!

By PAUL RESTUCCIA

Aliza Shapiro is doing her best to shake up conservative Boston. The 36-year-old impresario behind Truth Serum Productions in Dorchester presents cutting-edge cabaret, alternative music, drag and burlesque shows — some about as *outré* as you'll find among the Hub's art offerings.

She got started producing rock shows in the mid-'90s as part of her job as manager of indie label Pop Narcotic. She promoted gigs and a single for the band Helium as well as solo shows for its lead singer, Mary Timony.

"I've worked with her for years, and she's really motivated and inspiring," said Timony. "I love going to her shows — they're so interesting and different." "I got into producing because I wanted to book acts that I wanted to see," said Shapiro, who studied architecture at Rhode Island School of Design.

She was working for local architectural firm Elkus Manfredi until a post-9/11 slowdown left her unemployed. So she turned her avocation into a full-time job.

Producer Aliza Shapiro pushes envelope of Boston's art scene

A self-described culture vulture, Shapiro produces dozens of shows a year in venues that range from the Museum of Fine Arts and art galleries such as Zeitgeist in Cambridge to clubs including Buzz, T.T. the Bear's Place, Great Scott, Jacque's Cabaret, the Paradise and the Milky Way.

"I got tired of just seeing band after band, so I began to add comedians,

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